WHELF Shared LMS Benefits 2021/22

In 2016 the 9 Welsh higher education libraries, the National Library of Wales and NHS Wales libraries completed the implementation of Ex Libris' Alma and Primo. The benefits of sharing a Library Management and Discovery system continue to be realised.

Cost savings

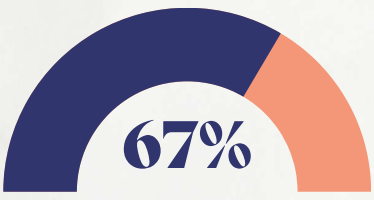
£150K saved each year on system subscription by purchasing as a consortium. £7200 saved each year as the National Library of Wales provide Welsh translation for all the libraries' system interfaces.

A contract extension was agreed in 2021 which runs until 2026. Collaborative negotiation led to a beneficial outcome for all members.

Igelu 2022 Conference

WHELF hosted the Igelu (International Group of Ex Libris Users) conference in September 2022. Taking place over 4 days in the wonderful surroundings of the Royal Welsh College of Music Drama. It was a hybrid conference with over 700 attendees from across the world.

As well as hosting, WHELF members delivered sessions:
Bronwen Blatchford – "WHELF+ interlending and Rapid ILL"
Alison Harvey – "Unlocking your collections with Alma Digital and IIIF"
Andrew Brown – "Using Design Thinking to create a new process for purchasing"
Jenny McNally – "Working together without a network zone"



Shared Analytics

The shared analytics group have continued to work on creating shared reports in Power BI. They have also looked at how libraries are gathering KPIs.

Discovery/ UX

A new group formed to work together on UX around discovery. Each member library is selecting an area to investigate and a UX tool to use. We will share the process and outcome and plan to produce case studies.

WHELF+ Interlending

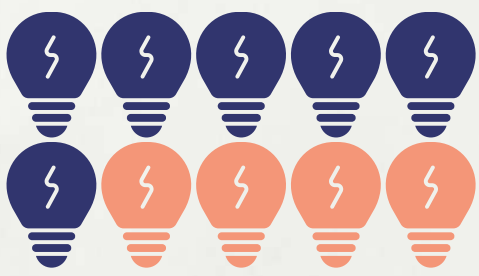
The WHELF+ interlending scheme continues to operate successfully. It maximises collections and delivers cost savings. We now have 15 members and welcomed 3 new libraries in 2022 – Harper Adams, the Natural History Museum, and the University of Cumbria.

In 2022, 4191 items were supplied through the scheme with over £33K saved across the members.

Sharing Experience

As well as monthly meetings to discuss systems issues and share advice, regular development sessions take place. Topics included stock check, Alma Digital, configuring vacation loans and a session with Ex Libris' content team.

In November 2021, we ran 2 online LMS days. WHELF members ran sessions including discovery, ebook workflows and an intro to APIs.



New technology

We monitor for new developments and collaborate to assess the benefit to individual libraries and WHELF. We have investigated Stackmap, Yewno, Rapido and contributed to Ex Libris' Collection Management development.